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SIPDIS

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E.O. 12958: DECL: AFTER KOREAN REUNIFICATION
TAGS: PREL PARM MARR KN KS JA
SUBJECT: READ-OUT ON COORDINATION MEETING WITH JAPANESE
OFFICIALS ON POSSIBLE TD-2 LAUNCH

REF: A. 06 TOKYO 4543
1B. 06 TOKYO 5336

Classified By: James P. Zumwalt, Charge d'Affaires, a.i.; reasons 1.4 (b/d)

SUMMARY

11. (S/NF) Alliance and intelligence managers from the Embassy, U.S. Forces Japan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Joint Staff Office and Ministry and Defense met on February 20 to discuss policy and intelligence coordination in anticipation of a possible North Korean missile launch. The meeting followed a request from the Foreign Ministry on February 16 to activate mil-mil Bilateral Coordination Centers (BCCs) at Yokota Air Base and MOD Headquarters. In order to support a coordinated response to a possible launch, the Japanese side offered to stand up informally elements of the Bilateral Coordination Mechanism (BCM). Both sides recognized the importance of both discrete and flexible coordination and the need to address intelligence sharing and information security issues related to the process. The U.S. side deferred policy discussions to separate diplomatic channels and urged both sides to focus on the mechanics of coordination. END SUMMARY.

PARTICIPATION

12. (S/NF) U.S. and Japanese Director-level Alliance managers convened on February 20 a preliminary meeting to discuss bilateral coordination modalities relating to a near-term possible North Korean missile launch. Embassy Tokyo Political Section, Regional Affairs Section (RAS), Defense Attache's Office (DAO), and U.S. Forces Japan (USFJ) J-2 and J-5 represented the U.S. side. The Japanese side included Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) officials from the National Security Policy Division, Northeast Asia

Division, Japan-U.S. Security Treaty Division, Policy Coordination Division, and First Division of the MOFA Intelligence and Analysis Service (IAS). Ministry of Defense (MOD) officials from the Defense Policy Division, Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation Division, Defense Intelligence Division, and Joint Staff J-5 also participated. (Full participation list in para 17)

STRUCTURING COORDINATION: THE "AZABUDAI" EXPERIENCE

¶13. (S/NF) Embassy Pol-Mil Chief asked the Japanese side to lay out its expectations on the bilateral coordination structure necessary to prepare for a potential DPRK missile launch. The 1997 Revised Defense Guidelines include specific coordination mechanisms. In 2006, however, the Japanese side turned down the U.S. request to activate these bodies, leading the two sides to rely on an ad hoc coordination body in the lead-up to the 2006 missile launch (the "Azabudai" process). Before proceeding further, he added, it would be useful to consider the extent to which future coordination should be formalized. He added that the focus for this discussion would be on the mechanics of coordination. Separate diplomatic channels are more appropriate for policy discussions, as all the content of our response will be made in Washington.

¶14. (S/NF) MOFA Japan-U.S. Security Treaty Division Director Kazuhiro Suzuki noted that the Japanese government had considered activating the BCM during the 2006 launch, but decided against it out of concern that doing so would have an escalatory effect. Embassy Pol-Mil Chief pointed out that both sides had agreed during the September 2006 "Capstone Lessons Learned Conference" for reviewing the bilateral response to the 2006 DPRK missile launches (Ref B) not to link the Bilateral Coordination Mechanism (BCM) activation with a decision to invoke the Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan (SIASJ) Law but instead, explore a wide spectrum of policy coordination. Both sides had agreed at the Capstone Conference on the need to begin consultations well before any public announcement.

FLEXIBLE OPTIONS: AN "INFORMAL" BCC, BCM?

¶15. (S/NF) MOD Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation Division Director Kiyoshi Serizawa said the Japanese government formally decided in 2008 that there is no hard linkage between activation of the two Bilateral Coordination Centers (BCCs) and SIASJ in order to allow greater flexibility. USFJ J-5 Director agreed that both sides should be as flexible as possible about initiating the BCM. He added that the recent Keen Edge bilateral exercise validated the BCM's utility. He also noted that the Azabudai meetings in 2006 seem to play the same role envisioned for the Policy Committee outlined in the Guidelines. MOFA Japan-U.S. Security Treaty Division Director Suzuki agreed, but suggested that the two sides not get too focused on the titles of various coordination organizations, to allow for flexibility in responding to inquiries if news of bilateral consultations got out.

BCC SIZE/TEMPO/TIMING

¶16. (S/NF) Regarding MOFA's suggestion of activating the two BCCs, USFJ J-5 Director stressed that both sides needed to pace the level of our activities carefully, as it could take weeks until an actual launch. Embassy Pol-Mil Chief asked whether JSO was planning an incremental BCC activation -- such as a low-level exchange of liaison officers -- or a hard start, with both sides standing up 24-hour watch centers. JSO J-5's CAPT Takashima responded the Japanese side is flexible on the size and participation of the BCC, noting, however, that sustaining full participation over long stretches of time would be difficult.

The start time would depend on the intelligence and analysis available at the time, as well as decisions by policymakers. Takashima agreed with USFJ's assessment that standing up the BCC at both MOD and USFJ Headquarters during the Keen Edge exercise was useful.

¶7. (S/NF) MOFA Japan-U.S. Security Treaty Division Director Suzuki asked whether MOD Internal Bureau would also be part of the BCC, or would participation be limited to uniformed officers. He suggested that MOFA may also send liaisons to ensure that they have visibility on any breaking developments. MOD's Serizawa highlighted the need to discuss the issue with JSO J-3 and MOD's Operational Policy Bureau. Pol-Mil Chief suggested that both USFJ and MOD ask their J-3 offices to develop a concept for the BCCs so that we can better frame future discussions. It would be useful to clarify whether both sides agree on what is the trigger for activation, frequency and other modalities, and at what stage are other government agencies brought in.

KEEPING POLICY GROUP SEPARATE FROM JCG

¶8. (S/NF) MOFA Japan-U.S. Security Treaty Division Director Suzuki asked whether Relevant Ministries and Agencies (RMAs) responsible for supporting military operations should be included in future coordination meetings. Embassy Pol-Mil Chief noted that the BCM envisions separate bodies to discuss policy-level (Policy Committee) and technical-level support (Joint Coordination Group, JCG) issues. In this instance, it would make sense to maintain this distinction in order to protect sensitive information. We could convene a separate JCG meeting to involve RMAs such as the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transportation and Tourism (MLIT) and Ministry of Information and Communication (MIC) to assist with issues such as frequencies, air space management, and other technical support activities. These meetings could focus on specific operational support issues without touching on sensitive or compartmentalized information. He noted that the existence of such a forum in 2006 could have helped facilitate our request to accelerate the operation of the FBX-T (X-band) radar in Shariki.

NOTIFICATION AND INFORMATION FLOW

¶9. (C) Pol-Mil Chief recommended that both sides review information sharing and notification procedures, as well as ensure both sides have the physical means of sharing classified information securely. MOFA National Security Policy Division Director Shimokawa said MOFA, MOD, and other national security ministries would normally pass all classified information to the Cabinet Secretariat, which would then disseminate to all organizations with a need to know. He questioned whether it is feasible to establish a single route for sharing information, as each agency has its own channels with U.S. counterparts.

¶10. (S/NF) Embassy RAS representative pointed out that both sides should examine existing channels for sharing classified information. MOD Defense Intelligence Division Director Atsuo Suzuki suggested that such intelligence should only be dealt with in designated channels, even though this may lead to delays in coordination and dissemination. The need for maintaining established channels runs counter, however, to the need for speed and removal of stovepipes.

¶11. (S/NF) Pol-Mil Chief responded that the two sides need to consider not only the flow of intelligence, but also operational information. In 2006, one major gap was the inability to get information on North Korean missile launches to MOFA. MOD was receiving real-time feed from USFJ, as was the Embassy, but there was no method to accurately convey developments to MOFA. This led to a gap

in public statements between the Foreign and Defense Ministers regarding the number of missiles that North Korea had fired.

¶12. (S/NF) MOFA's Kazuhiro Suzuki noted that intelligence accumulates in a matter of minutes when the situation reaches a crisis level, making it impossible to share information effectively if kept solely within established channels. Having a MOFA liaison to Japan's BCC at MOD headquarters would help, since there is a secure line between MOFA and MOD. MOD's Atsuo Suzuki stressed that intelligence channels should be kept separate from operational channels. USFJ J-5 Director questioned the utility of doing so.

¶13. (S/NF) USFJ J-2 representative highlighted the usefulness of co-locating Japanese and U.S. officials during the Keen Edge exercise, underscoring the importance of having a common bilateral intelligence and operational picture. Pol-Mil

Chief suggested both sides clarify and expand on two points: first, how should both sides share information if the threat is imminent; and second, at what level should both sides approach each other if conducting initial notification.

CLEARANCES: NOT FEWER BUT SMARTER

¶14. (S/NF) Embassy Pol-Mil Chief stressed that everyone involved in bilateral coordination should possess the same level of security clearances and be subject to the Defense Secrets Act (Note: which mandates up to 10 years imprisonment for unauthorized leaks). The aim is not to narrow the number of people with access to information, but to make sure those officials who will be making decisions possess the appropriate security clearances. Embassy RAS representative seconded this point, offering to help key Japanese officials get cleared for information in order for them to carry out their assignments.

LAUNCH AUTHORITY POSSIBLY DELEGATED TO COMMANDERS

¶15. (S/NF) MOD's Yamamoto said one major difference between the current environment and 2006 from MOD's perspective is the deployment of Japanese and U.S. ballistic missile defense (BMD) assets. MOD might possibly issue -- for the first time -- an advance order to the Air Defense Command to shoot down a North Korean missile if it were heading towards Japanese territory. USFJ J-5 Director asked if MOD envisioned the advanced deployment of PAC-3 missile batteries. Yamamoto responded that MOD does not plan to deploy PAC-3 at this stage in order to avoid attracting public attention.

OTHER ISSUES

¶16. (S/NF) MOD's Atsuo Suzuki pointed out that the two governments need to discern the DPRK's intent and initiate discussion on how to react in the event of a launch. MOFA's Shimokawa commented that MOFA has already begun internal discussions on a public press line to issue in response to a DPRK launch. Once this is finished, MOFA will provide to the U.S. side for coordination. Embassy Pol-Mil Chief said that we would share this with Washington so that we can consider complementary messages.

PARTIPANTS

¶17. (U)

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Japan:

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